



STEVEN M. FULOP  
MAYOR OF JERSEY CITY

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**\*\*\* PRESS RELEASE \*\*\***

### **Jersey City Selected to Continue Historic Library Renovation Project to Further Expand Community Resources**

*State Library Construction Bond Award Provides Critical Funding to Complete Restoration of Treasured Historic Building*

JERSEY CITY – **Mayor Steven M. Fulop** and the **Jersey City Free Public Library (JCFPL)** announced today a \$5 million request for funding to rehabilitate the historic Main Library has been approved by the New Jersey State Legislature as part of the Library Construction Bond Act. With this funding, being matched by the city, the renovation project will incorporate community input for various improvements, including expanding community space, adding public computer terminals, and modernizing technology throughout the Main Library building, the largest municipal library in the state.

“Our residents are relying on city services more than ever before due to the pandemic, and as one of the largest library systems in the state, we are always looking to expand access to community-focused educational, cultural, and employment resources that the library provides,” said **Mayor Fulop**. “I’m thankful to our state delegation who fought for our library, which is a cornerstone of our diverse community.”



The first three phases of the much-needed renovations on the Main Library began under Mayor Fulop in 2014 to restore and update the architectural gem, nearly 115 years after the library first opened its doors. The proposed plan for Phase IV utilizes the grant to nearly double total seating capacity and increase public computer terminals by 50-percent, increase shelving to accommodate more than 65,000 additional volumes, provide new public restrooms, including a gender-neutral restroom, add a new Teen Room, and a conservation and exhibit preparation workroom. A new environmentally controlled storage area will also safely secure rare local history documents.

The funding will also enable the library to add a variety of tech-infused and state-of-the-art meeting rooms that can be reserved by the public, including a 20-seat classroom, a 28-seat community room, and a 60-seat multipurpose room on the first floor. In addition, improvements throughout the main hallways of the building

will allow for the presentation of community art and visiting exhibitions. The monumental Main Stair will also be renovated, completing the decade-long renovation of a treasured historic building.

“We are very excited that we will be able to complete this rehabilitation of the Main Library and bring more public space to the building,” said **Library Director Jeffrey Trzeciak**. “This final phase will bring our library into the 21st century and really make it a destination space.”

“Our libraries provide invaluable resources to our residents, opening doors to countless opportunities while encouraging education and growth. This funding furthers our goal to create a safe community space that encourages everyone to achieve their full potential. This funding illustrates strong support to the community - especially as we face these challenging times,” said **Assemblyman Nicholas Chiaravalloti**.

The Library Construction Bond Act, approved by voters in November 2017, authorized \$125 million to fund critical improvements to the state’s public libraries. The JCFPL was among the top ten largest projects of 129 applications reviewed by a committee comprising experts from across various state agencies. Only one-third of applications were selected by the Governor for recommendation.



The JCFPL invites the community to join a virtual Town Hall on Wednesday, November 18th, 2020, at 1 p.m. or 6 p.m. to share feedback regarding the renovations. Registration is available for the 1 p.m. session at [http://bit.ly/JCLibraryTownHall\\_1pm](http://bit.ly/JCLibraryTownHall_1pm) and for the 6 p.m. session at [http://bit.ly/JCLibraryTownHall\\_6pm](http://bit.ly/JCLibraryTownHall_6pm). Attendees are welcome to submit questions in advance to [hello@jclibrary.org](mailto:hello@jclibrary.org), or ask questions during each live webinar session. All registrants will receive a recording of the Town Hall.

“Public libraries bolster quality of life and stability in urban communities. I thank the Governor, the State Librarian, and Dr. Hancock of Thomas Edison State University for recommending this \$5 million award, which will help our libraries realize Mayor Fulop’s vision of modernization and enhanced value in the 21st century,” said **Assemblyman Raj Mukherji**.

“Now, more than ever, with so much misinformation circulating, we need to support our libraries and other public learning centers throughout the state,” **Assemblywoman Angela V. McKnight**. “It is very encouraging that the Governor has selected two of our libraries in Hudson County to receive this much-needed funding for critical improvements and projects that will serve our youth, adults, and seniors who use our libraries in Jersey City and Bayonne.”

Director Trzeciak shared his gratitude for those who supported the library’s application and award. “I want to thank the voters who supported the bond, as well as the City of Jersey City and Mayor Fulop for their longstanding support of the renovation project.” Trzeciak added, “I am also grateful to our architect, Helena Ruman, who worked with me on the proposal, and Patty Anderson, who assisted me in writing and submitting the grant this summer.”

**Library Board President Curt Harris** said, “We were thrilled to hear the good news that our project was recommended by Governor Murphy. The Board thanks our Director, Jeffrey Trzeciak who came on board in November of 2019 and quickly worked to develop the proposal in spring of this year. It was his hard work and vision and made this a reality.”

The state-approved the library funding just days after Mayor Fulop announced plans to build a brand-new library branch within one of Jersey City's public housing sites to further expand residents' access to critical resources. The city also recently partnered with the JCFPL to launch a [data dashboard](#) that tracks circulation and electronic resource usage to monitor public data in order to better support and serve the community's needs.

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**About The Jersey City Free Public Library:**

The Jersey City Free Public Library is committed to promoting lifelong learning and cultivating equity in our community through innovative programs, engaging collections, welcoming spaces, and committed staff. Since 1889, the Jersey City Free Public Library has served one of New Jersey's most important cities – one of the most diverse communities in the nation. The Jersey City library system, which consists of the Priscilla Gardner Main Library, nine branches, and a Bookmobile, provides critical community-centered programming, literacy education, and access to a diverse collection of nearly one million pieces of printed, audiovisual, and electronic resources – a collection that addresses the needs of the truly multicultural population of Jersey City.

For the latest on programs, events, and special announcements, please follow the Library on **Facebook** (<https://www.facebook.com/JerseyCityFreePublicLibrary>), **Twitter** (@JCFPL\_NJ), **Instagram** (@jclibrarynj) and **YouTube** (@jclibrarynj), and visit us on the web at [www.jclibrary.org](http://www.jclibrary.org).

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